The Heart is Not a Size

Becka O’Neil

I read **The Heart is Not a Size** by Beth Kephart. In this book, Georgia and Riley, best friends since pre-school, take a trip south of the border. Georgia sees an ad about a service trip going to Juarez, Mexico, on the public announcement boards, and has a feeling that she it would be good for her. So, Riley wants to go with and it gives her time to get away from her scrutinizing mother.

The pair go to all the information meetings, and Riley’s mother turns up her nose at almost everything. So, they make preperations to leave, Riley making thirty-some bracelets to give to the girls in Juarez while Georgia learns the history of the city. They visit the horse show like they do every year, and Georgia realizes how horrible Riley’s mother is. Riley is sick of being called average, when Georgia knows she’s more than that.

They depart from El Paso, eager to help all the people. When they arrive, Georgia takes all the pictures she can with her new camera. The group of volunteers arrive, going in to the building that will be their home while in Mexico. Riley and Georgia can’t sleep, and are so excited for their first day. Georgia worries about having a panic attack, which have occurred since her late childhood.

No one is in the city when the volunteers first arrive and start digging the public restroom, which is their project. Georgia and Riley get into a fight because Riley isn’t eating much, and it ends with a falling out of friendship.

Georgia’s concern drives a hole in their friendship, and Riley buddies up with Sophie as replacement. Georgia falls into a bit of a rut, not focusing on anything but Riley. Georgia does make a friend out of the guys on the crew, impressing them with her strength and passion. When the children come to watch the volunteers work, Georgia finally snaps out of it. She becomes quite attached to a little girl, and when someone tells the child her mother is hurt, Georgia volunteers to walk her home.

Georgia breaks the biggest rule by going alone with the little girl. When she gets back, Riley has fainted and almost fell into the septic tank hole. Sophie and Georgia wait at the hospital and talk about Riley. Sophie helps Georgia through the fear that accompanies a friend in the hospital.

It’s a great book, and covers so many issues, from poverty to eating disorders. I would definetly recommend this book to any female on the planet who has a best friend they care about. Not to many guys would enjoy it, The Heart is Not a Size adresses more feminine issues. Beth Kephart did a great job delivering a great message with vivid characters, and I absolutely loved this book.